



# **Alphacom 32**

## **USERS MANUAL**



Figure 1

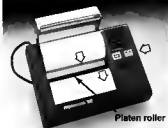


Figure 2

**INTRODUCTION** The Alphacom 32 printer gives a permanent record of anything your Sinclair ZX81™, or Sinclair Spectrum™ can display on the TV screen.

Supplied with the printer are 1) User Manual, 2) one roll of thermal paper and 3) a power supply unit.

**DESCRIPTION** Your printer is enclosed in an extremely tough ABS plastic molded case which is highly resistant to impact damage. The transparent paper cover is also made of ABS. The fine matte case finish requires no special care, and should be cleaned, if necessary, by wiping it with a slightly damp cloth. Do not use any type of wax cleaner.

Figure 1 illustrates the major components of the printer. The paper cover (1) is hinged to permit a roll of paper to be loaded and positioned.

Pressing the ON/ADVANCE button (2) places the printer in the printing mode and advances paper as long as it is held down. See section on SELF-TEST mode for additional functions of the ON/ADVANCE button. Pressing the OFF button (3) takes the printer out of the printing mode. It also starts and stops SELF-TEST mode described later in this manual.

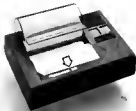
**Note:** The OFF button does not turn the line power off and on.

Ventilation slots are provided in the top and bottom covers for convection cooling of the internal components. The printer should always be placed on a hard surface so the cooling vents will not be obstructed in any way.

**CONNECTING POWER TO YOUR PRINTER** The printer receives its power from a separate power adaptor which can be plugged into any proper source of power. See label on Power Adaptor. Since power is applied to the internal circuitry whenever the adaptor is connected, it is necessary to unplug the power adaptor to completely turn off the printer. **Do not** place anything on top of the printer when it is plugged in as that will interfere with the air-cooling process.

**CONNECTING TO YOUR COMPUTER** Before connecting anything to your computer, **REMOVE POWER PLUGS** from the computer and the printer. If you are using a RAM pack, disconnect it from the computer. The edge socket on the end of the printer's cable snaps into the rectangular slot in the back of the computer. If you are using a RAM pack, snap it into the rectangular slot in the back of the printer connector. Now plug the power connector into the back of your printer and press the ON/ADVANCE button once. You are now ready to load the paper.

**PRINTER PAPER** The printer is designed to use standard thermographic printing paper in roll form. Included with your printer is a roll of Alphacom recommended paper which has



**Figure 3**



**Figure 4**

a 1.9" diameter. Replacement rolls of this paper are available at outlets carrying the Alphacom printer.

Make sure that the correct paper is always used, for sensitivity and smoothness of the paper is important for correct operation of the printer. Incorrect, or low-quality paper may result in poor heat transfer, smearing, and poor print contrast. **IMPORTANT:** Avoid use of abrasive papers, which can cause severe head damage in less than two hours of printing. For quality printing and longer head life use only Alphacom recommended paper.

**WARNING** This product contains no user serviceable parts inside, and the user should not open the protective plastic case. All normal operations can be conducted without opening the case. If the plastic cover is damaged through breakage, discontinue use of the appliance until the unit can be examined and repaired by an authorized Service Center.

**LOADING ROLL PAPER INTO THE PRINTER** Paper loading may be easily accomplished by following the steps shown in Figures 2, 3 and 4.

**STEP 1:** Open the paper receptacle cover.

**STEP 2:** Place the paper roll in the printer paper tray with about 6" of paper coming from underneath the roll. Insert the leading edge of the paper below the rubber platen, and press the ON/ADVANCE button. The paper will feed automatically. See Figure 2.

**STEP 3:** Reroll any loose paper coming from underneath the paper roll. Grasp the leading edge of the paper and hold it toward the front of the printing unit, then close the transparent cover. **IMPORTANT:** The leading edge of the paper must remain outside of the cover. See Figure 3.

**STEP 4:** Confirm that the paper is feeding correctly by pressing the ON/ADVANCE switch. Check that the paper feeds smoothly, evenly, and remains properly centered within the thermal head area. See Figure 4. When you are satisfied that the threading is correct, the excess paper may be removed by using the built-in paper leading edge.

**REMOVING A PARTIAL ROLL OF PAPER** In the event that a partially used roll of paper requires removal, follow these simple steps:

**STEP 1:** Tear off any excess paper protruding from the print head, using the built-in paper leading edge.

**STEP 2:** Open the paper receptacle cover. Cut the paper web with scissors behind the lead-in slot to the printer. The partially used roll may then be lifted out, and the paper in the print head area ejected by activating the manual ON/ADVANCE switch until all of the paper has passed through the print head area.

**CUSTOMER SERVICING OPERATIONS** With normal use, your printer should operate properly for an extended period without requiring any service. The following service operations are described because they might eventually be required and we want you to know how to perform them correctly if they should become necessary.

Any additional maintenance or repairs to the printer will require laboratory equipment and special components. Refer to the enclosed Warranty card for details.

**SELF TEST** A SELF-TEST mode has been built into your Alphacom 32 Printer to provide a simple operational check. When placed in this mode the printer repeatedly prints a line of the numeral "8" and a line of the numeral "1". The test mode is entered by pressing the OFF button once while holding the ON/ADVANCE button down then releasing the ON/ADVANCE button. To stop SELF-TEST, press the OFF button. To reset printer into printing mode press ON/ADVANCE button.

**PAPER JAMS** Under normal operation there should be no problem with paper jamming in the mechanism. In the event that small roll-ends of paper are removed or reinstalled in the printer, care should be taken that the tightly curled paper does not wrap under the paper stripper bar during the loading operation. If this occurs, the paper may begin to wrap around the platen, until a thick roll of paper builds up between the pressure plate and the platen, thereby stalling the printer. This is a difficult situation to remedy, since the platen will not rotate backwards. It is best avoided by careful loading practices.

If a paper jam does occur, disconnect the power to the printer and try the following technique to clear the jam:

1. Tear off and remove the paper roll from the paper compartment. Slice the paper layer by layer with a very sharp knife and pull paper out. **Do not** cut the platen.

**CAUTION:** Never use or place tools between the thermal heads and the platen. The probability of damage to the heads is very high under these circumstances.

2. The best cure for paper jamming, naturally, is PREVENTION—by careful loading of the printer, and checking for correct paper feeding at the start of printing, most jamming situations can be avoided.

**WARRANTY** For service under warranty, the printer must be returned to an authorized Alphacom Service Center. Contact the Service Center **BEFORE** returning the printer or power adaptor for service. See the enclosed Warranty card for additional information.

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